South Coast
Air Quality Management District

AQMD

Safety Tips for Residents

As Southern Californians battle the wildfires, there are measures we all can take to protect our health from the harmful pollutants filling our air.

If you are a healthy individual, the ash and smoke from the fires can irritate your eyes and airways, cause coughing and/or a scratchy throat. They can also irritate your sinuses, cause headaches or a runny nose. In addition to short-term effects, there may be long term effects that can significantly impact your health.

Following are some tips you can follow to protect you and your family members from the air pollution.

- **Stay indoors.** Limit your exposure to unhealthful air quality conditions as much as possible. Keep your windows and doors closed. Use your air conditioning system and place it on recirculation mode, if available.
- **Play indoors.** Choose indoor options when air pollution levels are unhealthful. Curtail your involvement in outdoor activities and events that require prolonged exposure and strenuous exercise or sports participation.
- **Reduce your outdoor activity.** Reducing your physical activity in outdoor areas lowers the amount of polluted air your body intakes.
- **Stay alert.** Listen to your local news and weather forecasts and air quality alerts provided by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD). If the air quality in your area worsens take necessary precautions and plan your activities accordingly.

While the ash and smoke are visible reminders of the pollution currently impacting our area, be even more cautious of the fine particles you can't see. These particles, which are invisible to the naked eye, bypass our natural defense system and lodge into our lungs. They can cause irritation, and over the long-term cause decreased lung function. They also make us more susceptible to developing diseases such as asthma, bronchitis, emphysema and possibly cancer.

If you have any questions about air quality, please call AQMD at **1-800-CUT-SMOG**
www.aqmd.gov.

Cleaning the air that we breathe...™